

FLUENCY

and the Common Core: Strategies that Count

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Session Goals

- **Offer a brief retrospective of fluency over the past dozen years**
- **Share a comprehensive construct of fluency that is aligned with the Common Core**
- **Provide a number of engaging strategies that will help students strengthen critical components of fluency in the Common Core era**

Fast Forward to the Common Core

- There is recognition of a deep construct of fluency
- In the K-5 Reading Foundational Skills, fluency is the fourth item listed at each grade level

K-5 Foundational Fluency Skill

“Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.”

NGA & CCSSO, 2010, p. 16. (This is the Common Core State Standards basic document.)

Grades 3-5 Foundational Skill

Read grade-level prose and poetry orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings.

Common Core State Standards English Language Arts Literacy

Fluency Components

- Accuracy
- Appropriate rate
- Expression (Prosody)
- Purpose and understanding
- Use context to confirm
- Self-correct word recognition; re-read as necessary

NGA & CCSSO, 2010. (This is the Common Core State Standards basic document.)

On-Level Texts

Pearson observes that in the current environment, we cannot manage to help our students handle texts that are at grade level. “I cannot imagine the exhortation to teachers and students to try harder will succeed where serious efforts to bring students up to grade-level expectation have failed.” p. 201

P. D. Pearson (2013). Research foundations of the Common Core State Standards in English language arts. In S. B. Neuman & L. B. Gambrell (Eds.), *Quality reading instruction in the age of the Common Core State Standards* (pp. 237-262). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Why are we so concerned with fluency when older students are expected to do more and more silent reading?

**Prosodic reading is a
hallmark of fluency.**

(Gross, Millett, Bartok, Bredell, & Winegard, 2014, p. 190)

**Nonprosodic reading
compromises
comprehension.**

(National Research Council, 1999)

**There is growing evidence
that the ability to use
appropriate prosody across
connected text plays a role in
skilled, silent reading.**

Gross, J., Millett, A.L., Bartok, B., Bredell, K.H., & Winegard, B., 2014. Evidence for prosody in silent reading. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 49, 2, p. 195.

**PROSODY: the rhythm and
melody of language**

- May be the connection between fluency and comprehension for both oral and silent reading
- May help students develop a “voice in their head” or “inner voice”

Gross, et al., 2014.

Elements of Prosody

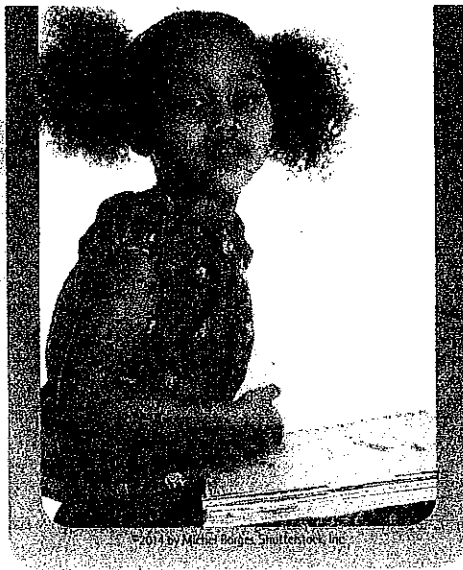
- Phrasing
- Stress
- Tone
- Pitch
- Intonation
- Volume
- Attention to Punctuation

**What can we do to
develop prosody?**

Model and Teach

- Read Aloud
- Fluency Development Lesson
- Paired or Partner Reading (Student Self-Managed Repeated Reading)
- Readers Theater
- Performance Poetry

**Suprasegmental
Prosodic
Sensitivity**



SECTION

4.5

Behavior Observed

The student's oral reading lacks expression.

Anticipated Outcome

The student will read orally with improved expression.

LACK OF EXPRESSION

Perspective and Strategies

Appropriate expression is typically characterized by using phrasing, punctuation, tone, emphasis, intonation, and pitch to help convey the author's message and to facilitate comprehension. Prosody (Cecil, 2007; Dowhower, 1991) is the term often used for these elements. Several other sections of this chapter deal with some of these elements, and you might refer to them (see 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4) for additional ideas. Expression can be influenced by the student's automaticity (immediate recognition of words), understanding of punctuation, use of typographic signals (e.g., bold print, type size, italics), and the quality of instruction in prosodic cues. It is also important to ensure that the student is given reading materials that are at an appropriate level. Some strategies to use are presented below.

1. If the student's sight vocabulary is limited, refer to Chapter 3 for ideas to build greater automaticity with words.
2. Take time to teach the various elements of prosody within the ongoing instructional program. Many of these elements can be modeled and discussed when you read orally to students. Comment on relevant elements before or after you read a particular sentence or passage. It is often helpful for students to see the passage when you are using it instructionally. Consider the sentence that follows from a novel by Sansom (2005).

"Yeeees," she said, drawing out the "yes" as though stretching a balloon.

You might display this sentence to students and say something like what follows.

You can see that the first word looks strange, but the rest of the sentence gives us a clue as to how it should be read. Listen as I read the sentence and pay particular attention to how I stretch out the word yes. [Read the sentence and then have students echo your reading. Pointing out that the way the word was stretched out gives the reader a cue as to how it should be read.]

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3. Use sentences or short passages from students' reading materials to teach, model, and practice other aspects of prosody in a manner similar to the first example. Some examples (Sansom, 2005) for possible use are also provided below.

"Don't go. Sit down. Come on. Come on! Sit!"
 "Take. The keys," said Ted insistently.
 "I'm delighted, delighted, delighted. Wonderful!"
 "Oh, that's great! That's great," exclaimed Linda.
 It was his *head* that hit the tree first.
 "Ah, right. I'm afraid . . . actually I lost all that stuff, I'm afraid."

4. Encourage students to be alert for interesting sentences in their reading that can be shared with other students. Be sure to have the student highlight the particular prosodic element. You might also share some of the sentences that follow.

Very quietly Cote said, "I don't think I can go."
 He looked both ways—and then he ran across the street.
 The swing went higher and higher and HIGHER!
 Jose, a very friendly person, was chosen to greet the guests.
 I want *more*!
 Wait—I forgot my gift.

5. Promote expressive reading by using plays and reader's theater scripts (see the chapter Overview for sources of scripts).
6. Select a portion of text that contains prosodic features you want to help students understand. Reproduce the text and share a copy with each student. Read the selection aloud using no expression, pauses, or changes in pitch. Ignore punctuation. Invite reactions from students and then have them listen as you read the passage with expression. Discuss cues in the passage that helped you read it appropriately. Then have students practice the passage with a partner. You can also provide a new passage containing features you just modeled, have students read it silently, and then read it with their partners. Finally, ask several students to read the passage to the class using good expression. Provide guidance as needed and praise expressive reading.
7. Have students listen to recorded texts that model good expression. Students should have a copy of the text so they can follow along. Later, provide opportunities for students to read portions of the text to model the recording.
8. Encourage students to read poems in an expressive manner with partners (Calo, Woolard-Ferguson, & Koitz, 2013). Share some of your favorite poems and make them available for students to read along with you. Several poems for your possible use are printed below.

Selected Poems by Annette Johns*

Two Robins

Two Robins take turns—
 At dawn I caught them—
 Pulling up and downing worms,
 Each to each one's belly.
 No one taught them
 They simply knew our lawn
 Was an open-early deli!

Morning

A night's dream ends
 With the tea kettle's screams.
 The sun breaks the day open
 Just like the morning's egg,
 And silence is gone
 Long before the bacon's done.

*Used with permission.

Rain

I love the sound of rain
Smacking the ground.
Wet hunger hurrying down
To taste the town.

A Hot Day in May

This May day the sun has his way
In mother nature's kitchen:
A no-fuss artist, he begins
To cook us with his rays.
His oven, like our microwaves,
Breaks us down and heats us up
Instantly—now we are ready to be
T.V. dinners for the stars!

Corn

The corn was cut a month ago—
It's in the silo saved.
And now the field, all stubble and snow
Looks like my father's face
Lathered up to shave!

Summer

Dandelion days have come
And the air's a hum with bees—
This pleases some enormously
But only makes me sneeze!

9. Older students can be encouraged to read famous speeches and select portions of them to share with an audience. Actual recordings of some famous speeches (e.g., FDR, Martin Luther King, Jr.) can be found on the Internet so students can listen to the speech as they read along and prepare for their performance.
10. Prepare a sheet containing character dialogue from your curriculum or develop some. Share the segments with students and have them practice aloud the way the character(s) might have spoken. Encourage students to look for typographic signals or other cues for phrasing, emphasis, and so on. Model a sample. Some possible items to use or adapt are listed below.

Eyeballs for sale!

This is my *first* time.

Where do you want me to put the **biggest** box?

Watch your head!

Mr. West, our teacher, is also a great singer.

Do you want chocolate or vanilla ice cream?

I think Montana is the best state.

Where did you put my gift?

It's hot, so you don't need a sweater.

Let's go!

Where have you been?

I felt the mud squish between my toes.

What is your **favorite** computer game?

I heard a tiny bird go *cheep, cheep, cheep*.

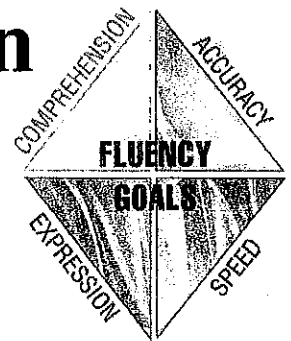
That's a great book!

The dog had l-o-n-g white hair and some brown spots.

Please, oh **please**, help me lift this box.

Would you like it?

Fluency Development Lesson



Materials

- ◆ Reading selection

Use

- ◆ Whole Group
- ◆ Partner

Reader Types

- ◆ 4
- ◆ 5
- ◆ 6

Description

The Fluency Development Lesson combines several oral reading strategies to create multiple opportunities for readers who struggle to hear and practice fluent reading (Padak & Rasinski, 2008). The lesson is designed to be used at least four times per week over an extended period of time, to encourage accurate word recognition and expression which ultimately contribute to thoughtful reading. This procedure involves reading to, with, and by students.

Procedure

1. Give students copies of a reading passage consisting of 50 to 200 words.
2. Read the text aloud while students follow along silently. This step may be repeated several times.
3. Discuss the content of the text with the students and encourage them to think about the way in which you read it aloud to them. Ask them how you used your voice, rate, and expression to help convey the meaning of the text.
4. Next, using Echo Reading (see page 60) and then Choral Reading (see page 61), have students read the text with you. It is important to continue to model fluent reading as students read with you and echo your reading.
5. When students appear to be developing proficiency and confidence in reading the text with you, have students form pairs.
6. Have student pairs move to various locations in the classroom. One student now reads the text aloud three times to his or her partner, while the partner follows along in the text. The listener provides help, if needed, and gives positive feedback such as, "You read all the words correctly," or "You really sounded excited when you read the part where they were running away from the bear."
7. Have students reverse roles so the reader becomes the listener and the listener becomes the reader. Repeat the above step.
8. Ask students to come back together as a whole group and ask for volunteers to read the text aloud to the entire group. At this time, the listeners do not follow along, but instead, enjoy the performance of their peers.
9. Praise students for their oral reading proficiency and their excellent listening behaviors.
10. Encourage students to take one copy of the passage home and read it to parents and relatives.
11. Put one copy of the passage into a notebook or folder for each student. Selected passages can be used for choral reading on successive days.

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Untimed Repeated Reading Record

Fluency Record

Name _____ Date _____

Title _____ Start Page _____ End Page _____

First Reading

How do you think you read? _____

How can your partner help you? _____

Did you understand what you read? Yes No (If no, can your partner help?)

Number of Miscues _____

I used the punctuation correctly.	Almost Always	Sometimes	Rarely
-----------------------------------	---------------	-----------	--------

I read with expression.	Almost Always	Sometimes	Rarely
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I was able to read smoothly, without pausing a lot.	Almost Always	Sometimes	Rarely
---	---------------	-----------	--------

The reading sounded like talking.	Almost Always	Sometimes	Rarely
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Goal for next reading (circle one above)

Second Reading

How do you think you read? _____

How can your partner help you? _____

Did you understand what you read? Yes No (If no, can your partner help?)

Number of Miscues _____

I used the punctuation correctly.	Almost Always	Sometimes	Rarely
-----------------------------------	---------------	-----------	--------

I read with expression.	Almost Always	Sometimes	Rarely
-------------------------	---------------	-----------	--------

I was able to read smoothly, without pausing a lot.	Almost Always	Sometimes	Rarely
---	---------------	-----------	--------

The reading sounded like talking.	Almost Always	Sometimes	Rarely
-----------------------------------	---------------	-----------	--------

I was able to reach my goal. Yes No

My goal for the next reading is _____

Adapted from Moskal, M.K. (2005/2006). Student self-selected repeated reading: Successful fluency development for disfluent readers. *Illinois Reading Council Journal*, 34(1), 3-11.

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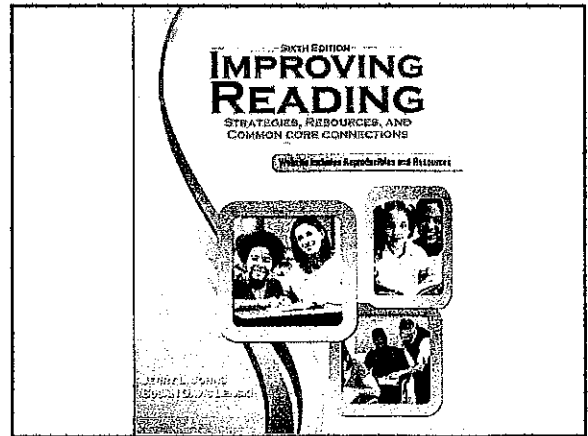


Suggested Resources (for Readers Theater)

- <http://www.aaronshelp.com/rt>
<http://www.poetryteachers.com>
<http://www.readerstheatre.ecsd.net/collection.htm>
<http://readinglady.com>
<http://scriptsforschools.com>
<http://www.cdli.ca/CITE/langrt.htm>
<http://www.storycart.com>
<http://www.teachingheart.net/readerstheater.htm>
<http://www.timelessteacherstuff.com>
<http://www.storiesstogrowby.com/script.html>
www.literacyconnections.com/ReadersTheater/html
www.fictionteachers.com/classroomtheater/theater.html
<http://www.loiswalker.com/catalog/guidesamples.html>
Barchers, S. I. (1993). *Readers theatre for beginning readers*. Portsmouth, NH: Teacher Ideas Press.
Bauer, C. F. (1991). *Presenting reader's theater: Plays and poems to read aloud*. New York: H. W. Wilson.
Braun, W., & Braun, C. (2000). *A readers theatre treasury of stories*. Calgary: Braun & Braun.
Dixon, N., Davies, A., & Politano, C. (1996). *Learning with readers theatre*. Winnipeg, MB: Peguis.
Fredericks, A. (1993). *Frantic frogs and other frankly fractured folktales for readers theatre*. Portsmouth, NH: Teacher Ideas Press.
Fredericks, A. (1997). *Tadpole tales and other totally terrific treats for readers theatre*. Portsmouth, NH: Teacher Ideas Press.
Fredericks, A. (2000). *Silly salamanders and other slightly stupid stuff for readers theatre*. Portsmouth, NH: Teacher Ideas Press.
Glasscock, S. (2000). *10 American history plays for the classroom*. New York: Scholastic.
Haven, K. (1996). *Great moments in science experiments and readers theatre*. Portsmouth, NH: Teacher Ideas Press.
Ratliff, G. L. (1999). *Introduction to readers theatre: A classroom guide to performance*. Colorado Springs, CO: Meriwether Publishing.
Shepard, A. (2004). *Folktales on stage: Children's plays for reader's theater*. Redondo Beach, CA: Shepard.
Sloyer, S. (2003). *From the page to the stage: The educator's complete guide to readers theatre*. Westport, CT: Teacher Ideas Press.
Walker, L. (1997). *Readers theatre strategies for the middle and junior high classroom*. Colorado Springs, CO: Meriwether Publishing.

Path to Recording Apps for I-Pad and I-Phone

1. Go to App Store
2. Search "Recording"
3. Look for "by Lin Fei"
4. Possible Choices:
 - Recording-Recorder 2 Professional Recorder Utilities (Free)
 - Recording Lite Utilities (Free)



Common Core Fluency Help in *Improving Reading*

Accuracy 4.1, 4.5, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9

Rate 4.1, 4.4, 4.5

Expression 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.5, 4.9

Purpose and understanding 1.5, 2.2, 6.1, 6.5; chapters 6, 7, and 8

Use context to confirm 3.7, 3.9, 3.10, 4.8

Self-correct and rereading 3.9, 3.10, 4.12

Strengthening Our Practices

- Use a variety of approaches
- Do not over-rely on commercial programs
- Remember that students lacking fluency may need to be taught foundational skills
- Embrace a deep construct of fluency

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